



February 2002

AFRL Reservists mobilize for Operation Noble Eagle

by Rex Swenson, Munitions Directorate

EGLIN AFB, Fla. — The events of September 11, 2001, not only changed everyone's lives, but also the way in which warfare is conducted. As outlined by President George W. Bush in a speech to America, "... the way we will conduct this war will be vastly different from previous wars."

This new method of conducting warfare relies heavily on rapidly changing technology. To put this new technology into the hands of the warfighter in the form of mature munitions requires rapidly accelerating the development of promising emerging technologies and transitioning them into weapons.

To answer the call for accelerated weapons development, the Air Force Research Laboratory stood up an AFRL Crisis Action Team (ACAT) to determine which technologies would be most suitable for acceleration. The Munitions Directorate (MN) formed its portion of the ACAT and tapped its reserve force to augment the active duty force.

Anticipating a long duration for the ACAT, the MN Director and the senior individual mobilized augmentee agreed to use their reserve force to provide a continuous presence of two officers to augment the active force: one field grade and one company grade. For six months, the reserve officers would rotate into the positions using a combination of their annual tours and inactive duty training days.

Within 24 hours of this meeting, the first team of reservists, Lt. Col. LuAnn Cutler, Capt. Ben Addison, Capt. Dave Foley and Capt. Rob Padgett reported for duty. Lt. Col. Cutler provided support to the Munitions Directorate ACAT director by constructing robust profiles of eight technology programs with a high potential for acceleration (into warfighter hands up to 12 times faster). Captains Addison, Foley, and Padgett ensured coverage of the control room 24-hours a day, seven days a week, and through their round-the-clock reporting process provided



CONTROL ROOM — From left, IMAs Capt. Ben Addison, Dave Foley and Rob Padgett update the status of accelerating technology programs. (Air Force photo)

warfighters with updates on candidate programs.

The most promising program was accelerated immediately shaving 12 months from its schedule and putting cutting edge weapons technology in warfighter hands in just four months. The reservists expertly captured all taskings, procedures, and responses and developed a lessons-learned document, which will enable an even faster response to any possible future crisis.

According to Col. Tom Masiello, MN Director, "The reservist team provided excellent augmentation to the Munitions Directorate activities during Operation Noble Eagle enabling Air Force research and development to accelerate and keep pace with high tempo Air Expeditionary Force operations." @